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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS, TIP REPORT

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage July 7-9 on the legislators' elections and the presidential election in Taiwan, which are scheduled to be held in January and March, 2008, respectively. The centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" ran the results of its latest opinion survey on page two of its July 7 edition, showing that 21.6 percent of those polled said they would vote for DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh if he picks former acting Kaohsiung mayor Yeh Chu-lan as his running mate, while 38.7 percent said they would vote in favor of the KMT's Ma-Siew ticket. The pro-unification "United Daily News" ran a banner headline on page four of its July 7 edition which read "Frank Hsieh: to Reduce Confrontation, Both Sides [of the Taiwan Strait] Should Resume Dialogue."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a "China Times" news analysis discussed the Taiwan authorities' recent efforts in requesting that Washington reiterate its "Six Assurances" to Taiwan, which were made during the Reagan administration. The article said the DPP administration is attempting to force the United States to state clearly its position on Taiwan's sovereignty. An editorial in the conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" said Taiwan's leaders should keep their promises if they expect Washington to do the same. Former AIT chairman Nat Bellocchi said in an op-ed in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" that "for getting the right people in the U.S. government to better understand the complicated and sensitive issues surrounding Taiwan, there must be some process of dialogue between the two sides." A separate "China Post" editorial discussed Washington's "strategic ambiguity" toward the cross-Strait issues and urged the United States to be impartial toward both sides of the Taiwan Strait. A "Taipei Times" editorial, on the other hand, commented on the State Department's "2007 Trafficking in Persons Report" and said "each and every one in a privileged land who for his or her own comfort and economic benefit takes advantage of cheap labor at the cost of human rights, contributes to the victimization of workers not protected by the same rights we take for granted." End summary.

¶3. U.S.-Taiwan Relations

A) "Return to Historical Fact; [Taiwan] Is Forcing the United States to State Clearly Its Position on [the Island's] Sovereignty"

Journalist Chiang Hui-chen noted in an analysis in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] (7/7):

"In the face of the fact that Taiwan's elbow room in the international community has constantly been squeezed [by China] and that less than nine months are left in the remainder of Bian's term of office, high-ranking national security officials have come up with a strategy to 'define [Taiwan's] sovereignty.' In addition to campaigning for holding a referendum on the island's bid to join the United Nations, the officials also expect that the United States will reiterate its 'Six Assurances' made during the Reagan

administration in the hope of elevating Taiwan's sovereignty status.

But Washington remained unmoved. Taiwan then applied a new strategy to 'return to historical fact,' hoping to use arguments over the wording to force the United States to reiterate its 'Six Assurances' and thus reinforce Taiwan's status in the international community. ...

"Sources said such a [strategic] move was a result of the planning by [Taiwan's] national security system, and it was intended to be used in tandem with the referendum on Taiwan's UN bid. Taiwan hopes that Washington's reiteration of the 'Six Assurances' would help clear away the stagnant atmosphere currently surrounding Taiwan-U.S. relations. In the meantime, Taiwan also attempted to force Washington to admit that the recent series of moves by China to suppress Taiwan in the international community did not meet the United States' commitment toward Taiwan's sovereignty several

decades ago, and that Washington's open opposition to Taiwan's recent efforts in pursuing its sovereignty was also akin to 'slapping itself in the face.' ... "

B) "Who Needs Reassuring?"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (7/8):

"... We agree with President Chen that the "Six Assurances" form an important bedrock in U.S. policy toward Taiwan and have resulted in decades of stability and prosperity in the region. However, we wonder why officials including President Chen himself clearly do not feel obliged to keep their own more recent promises to the United States. While we want the United States to keep its promises, our leaders should also keep their promises to Washington if we are to expect our American friends to do the same. ..."

C) "The US and Taiwan's Referendums"

Nat Bellocchi, former chairman of AIT and now special adviser to the "Liberty Times Group," opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (7/8):

"... [T]he US has told Taiwan that it opposes Taiwan seeking to join the UN under the name of 'Taiwan.' ... The US should not meddle in this issue because the people of Taiwan have shown they support having referendums. The two main political parties say they have the right to hold a referendum on joining the UN, but are arguing over the name that should be used for Taiwan. It is not a good idea for a country to get involved in other countries' democratic processes. Further, in next year's presidential election, there will be a decision on a new president and there may be two referendums, one on the UN and the other on the KMT's stolen assets.

A total of 113 legislators will have been elected and its impact will be felt. The results of this and the presidential decision will determine Taiwan's future. It is likely to be even more tense than 2004.

"As for getting the right people in the US government to better understand the complicated and sensitive issues surrounding Taiwan, there must be some process of dialogue between the two sides -- a real dialogue between senior experts from a variety of government agencies -- perhaps given a short unofficial time for them -- who can meet periodically and press for consensus on important issues."

D) "Strategic Ambiguity over the Status quo"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (7/9):

"... Although they may differ on how to define the status quo, the American officials are in accord that the United States would never make clear what action it would take against a violation. Well, it's called strategic ambiguity. Washington knows the status quo is defined differently in Beijing and Taipei, and does not want to tell either of them how it would react when what it considers a change occurs. The United States opposes any unilateral change in the status quo as it defines it, but so far has used that phrase only to describe moves taken by Taipei that are regarded as 'provocative.'"

"Cruise missiles alone, of course, may not be deemed to pose a serious enough threat to the security of Taiwan. Beijing certainly thinks its missile buildup is so perceived in Washington. That's why China has increased the deployment from 350 missiles in 2003 to close to 1,000 now. Leaders in Beijing also believe threatening words pose no serious threat of resorting to the use of force of arms against Taiwan. As a result, the PRC passed an Anti-secession Law in March last year [sic], codifying a prompt invasion of Taiwan if and when independence is declared on the island. There has been little or no public comment from the United States.

"That's unfair. Uncle Sam has to be fair, if the country wants to be an arbiter. Uncle Sam must warn President Chen Shui-bian against writing a 'timely, apt and viable' constitution for Taiwan as a move to unilaterally change the status quo and urge the equally provocative People's Republic of China to remove the missiles from its southeast coast. President Hu Jintao of China may comply, because the missiles which are mobile can be removed and then redeployed in no time, if he so wishes. Shouldn't Uncle Sam try to be a fair referee in the ball game played between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait?"

14. TIP Report

"The Human Cost of Cheap Labor"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (7/8):

"In the US State Department's '2007 Trafficking in Persons Report' released on June 12, Taiwan was upgraded from the 'Tier 2 Watch List' to 'Tier 2 Status.' That is no reason to be complacent, however. Although the public is by now used to evening news stories about illegal immigrants discovered slaving under deplorable conditions, most Taiwanese remain blissfully unaware of the true extent of the problem. ... The trafficking scene in Taiwan revolves largely around Southeast Asian and Chinese workers. In addition, legal immigrants can end up illegals susceptible to rights abuses. ...

"But it would be unfair to discuss trafficking without mentioning the disturbing context that allows it to flourish. The tragic reality of poverty abroad, combined with the vast market here for cheap labor and prostitution, is what drives human trafficking. Each and everyone in a privileged land who for his or her own comfort and economic benefit takes advantage of cheap labor at the cost of human rights, contributes to the victimization of workers

not protected by the same rights we take for granted."

YOUNG